

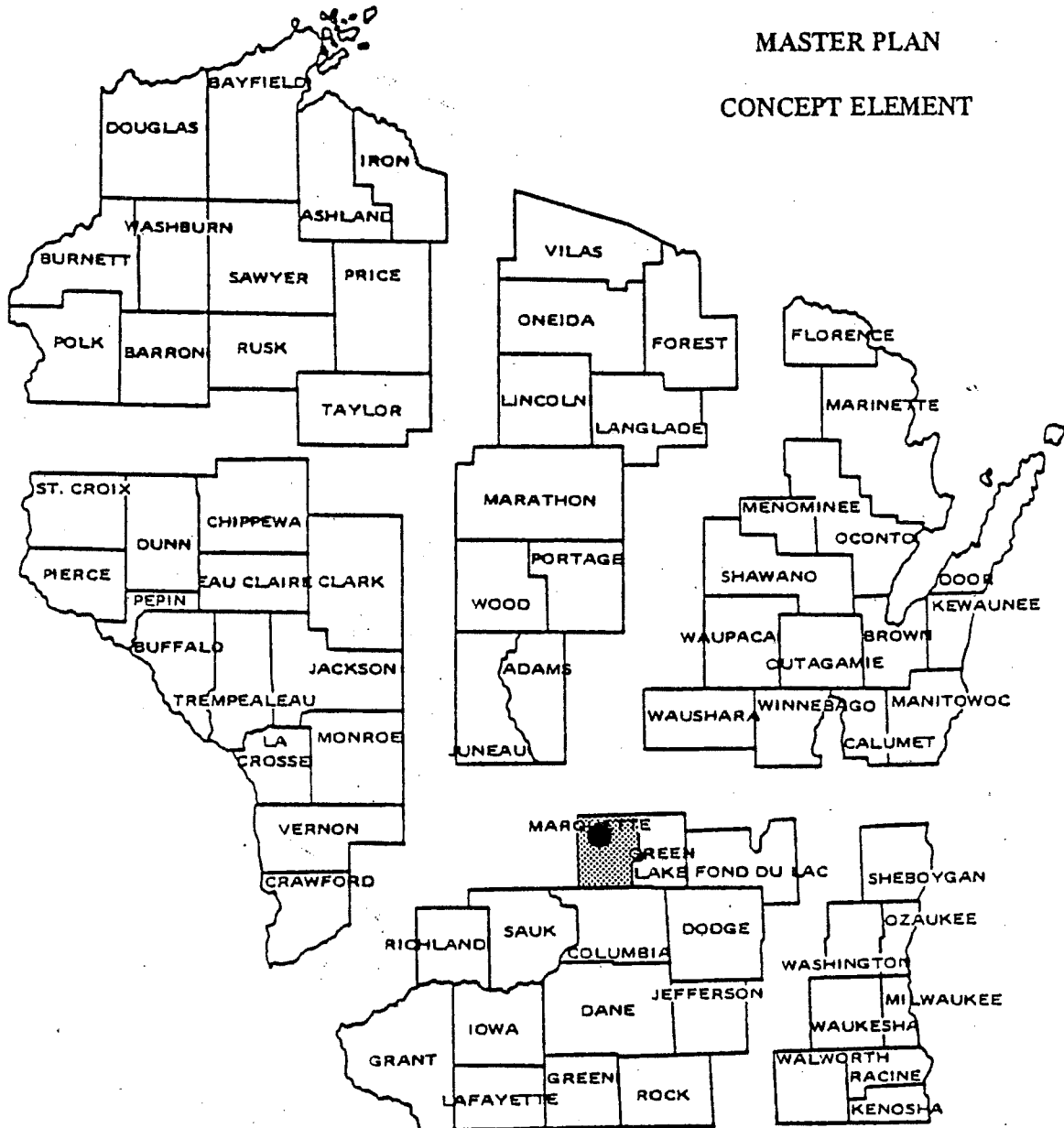
Diane

PROPOSED CAVES CREEK FISHERY AREA

MARQUETTE COUNTY

MASTER PLAN

CONCEPT ELEMENT



Property Task Force

Leader – Dale Brege, Fish Manager
Tom Hansen, Wildlife Manager
Jim Kronschnabel, Forester

Approved by Natural Resources Board

Date

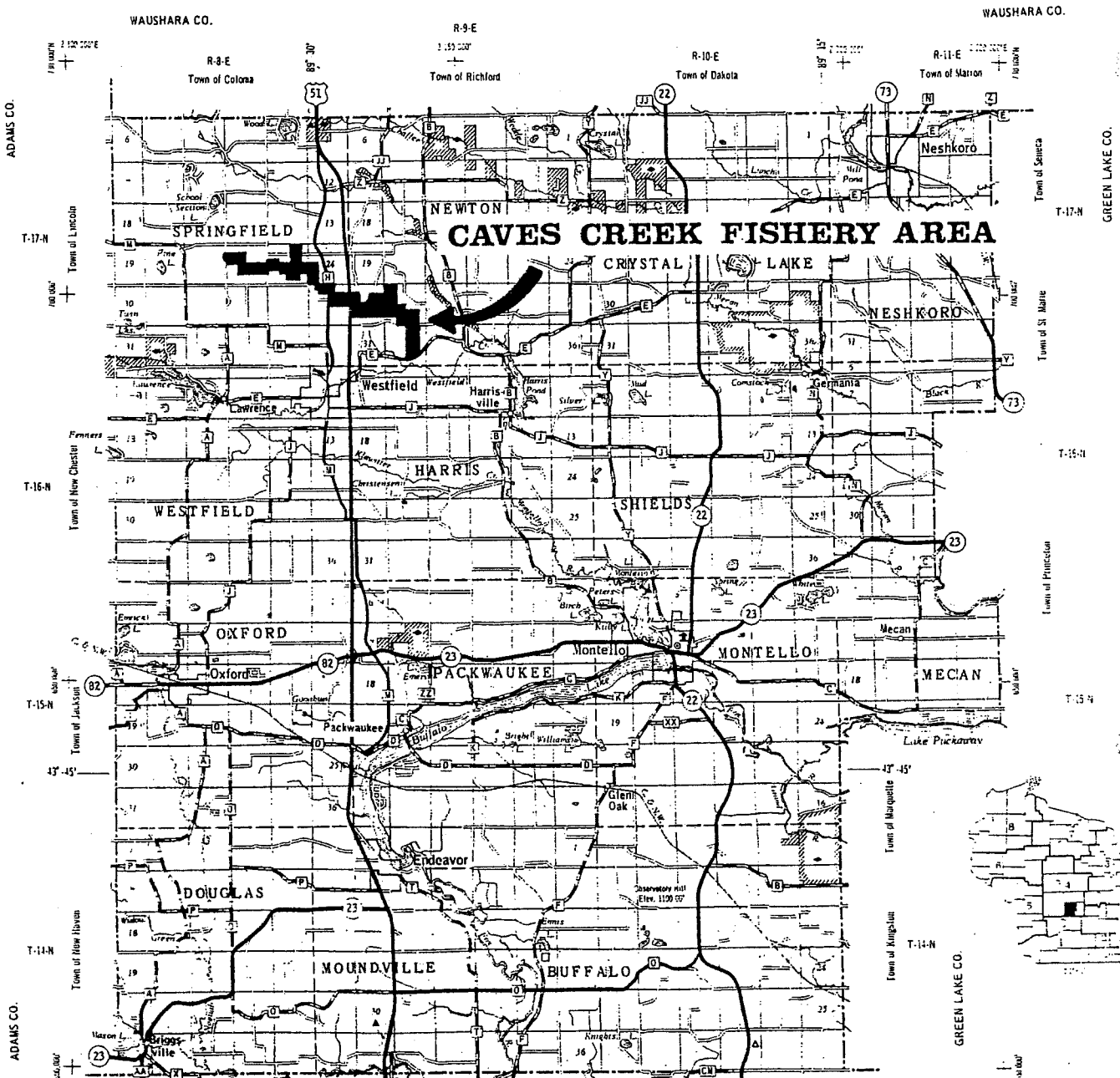
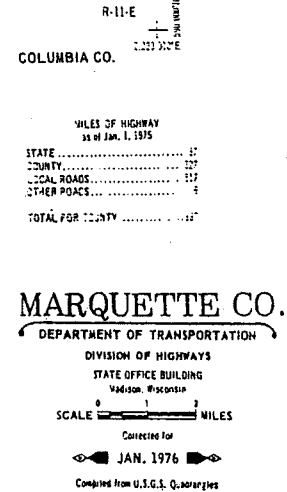
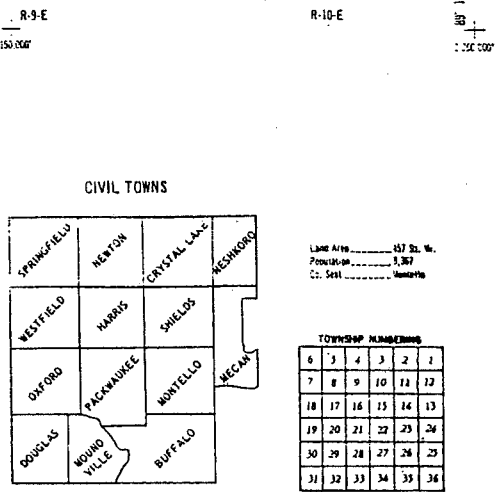
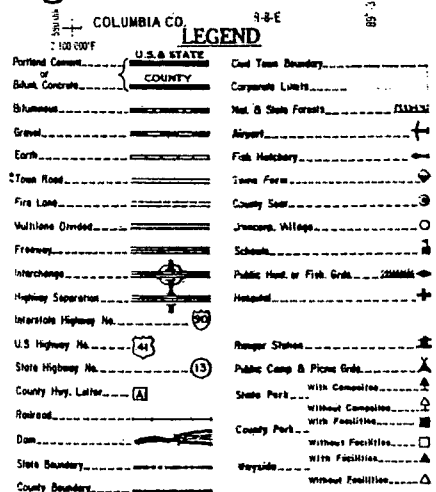


Figure 1. Location—Caves Creek Fishery Area, Marquette County.



* Surface types on town roads and streets

+ Grid based on Wisconsin coordinate system, south zone.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
SECTION I - ACTIONS	
GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ADDITIONAL BENEFITS	1
RECOMMENDED MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM	1
SECTION II - SUPPORT DATA	
BACKGROUND INFORMATION	7
RESOURCE CAPABILITIES AND INVENTORY	8
MANAGEMENT PROBLEMS	12
RECREATION NEEDS AND JUSTIFICATION	13
ANALYSIS OF ALTERNATIVES	13
APPENDIX	

SECTION I - ACTIONS

GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND ADDITIONAL BENEFITS

Goals

To preserve and enhance the Caves Creek Fishery area in Marquette County for trout fishing and other compatible recreational activities that are consistent with maintaining an aesthetically pleasing area.

Annual Objectives

1. Provide opportunities for 1,000 angler days of fishing for brook trout.
2. Provide opportunities for 1,000 participant days of hunting for white-tailed deer, ruffed grouse, gray and fox squirrels, waterfowl, woodcocks, pheasants and cottontail rabbits, plus 200 participant days of trapping for raccoons, red foxes and muskrats.

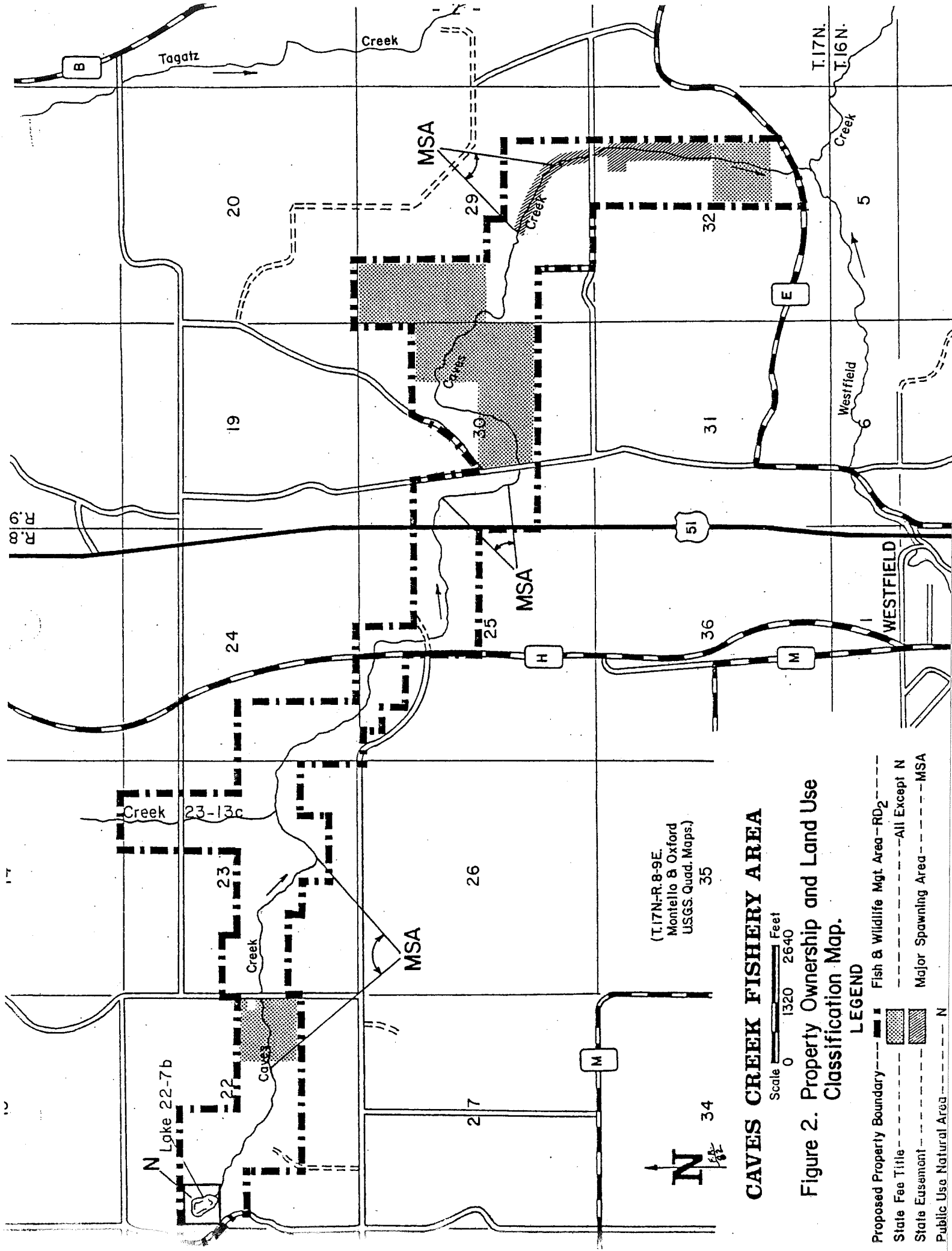
Annual Additional Benefits

1. Provide 425 participant days of other recreational and educational activities, including nature hiking, berry and mushroom picking, bird watching, cross-country skiing, photography and snowshoeing.
2. Manage the timber resources to create habitat variety and to provide a limited amount of commercial forest products.
3. Contribute to the habitat of nongame species including migratory endangered and threatened species.

RECOMMENDED MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The recommended management and development program for the Caves Creek Fishery Area, Marquette County (Figure 1), is designed to increase angler opportunities for a quality trout fishing experience and to maintain or improve existing wildlife habitat.

The property boundary as proposed is designed to acquire sufficient acreage adjacent to the stream while providing a buffer zone with a natural setting along the stream corridor. The overall objective recommended by the Department is to protect, preserve and enhance the natural aesthetics of the fishery while providing a high level of outdoor recreational opportunity. The management and development program calls for limited improvements of the property. Proposed property boundaries with management and development activities are shown in Figures 2 and 3.



CAVES CREEK FISHERY AREA

Figure 2. Property Ownership and Land Use Classification Map.

- LEGEND**
- Proposed Property Boundary ---
 - State Fee Title -
 - State Easement -
 - Public Use Natural Area - N
 - Fish & Wildlife Mgt. Area--RD₂ -
 - All Except N -
 - Major Spawning Area - MSA

Scale 0 1320 2640 Feet

(T.17N-R.8-9E.
Montello & Oxford
USGS. Quad. Maps)

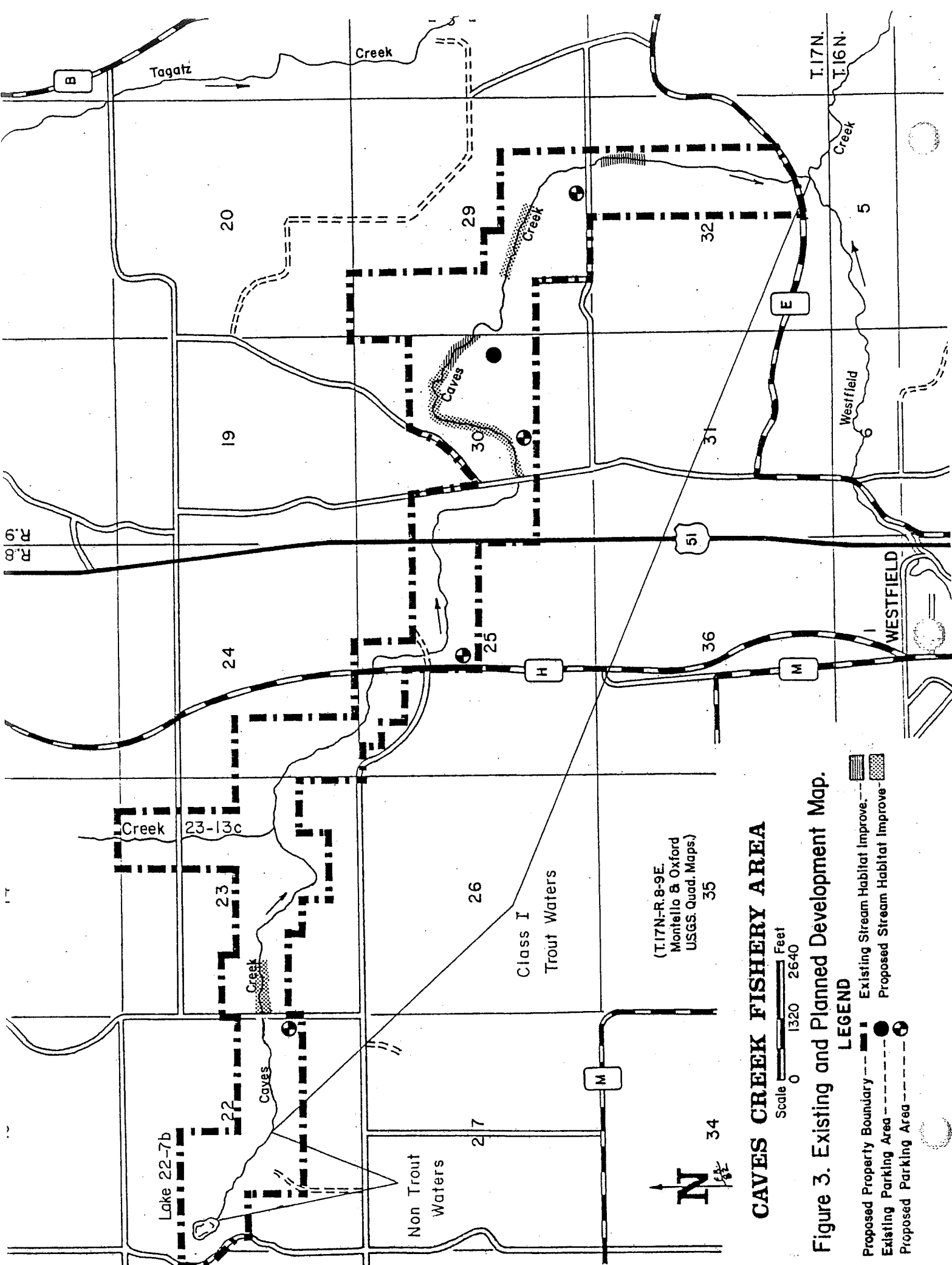


Figure 3. Existing and Planned Development Map.

All past land acquisition on Caves Creek has been accomplished under the Marquette County Remnant Program established in 1961. The current public ownership is 301.98 acres in fee title and 24.55 acres in perpetual easement (Figure 2). The recommended acreage goal is 540.0 acres. If this acreage goal is approved, acquisition would be 60.5% completed.

If the proposal to create the Caves Creek Fishery Area is approved by the Natural Resources Board, the following actions will be necessary:

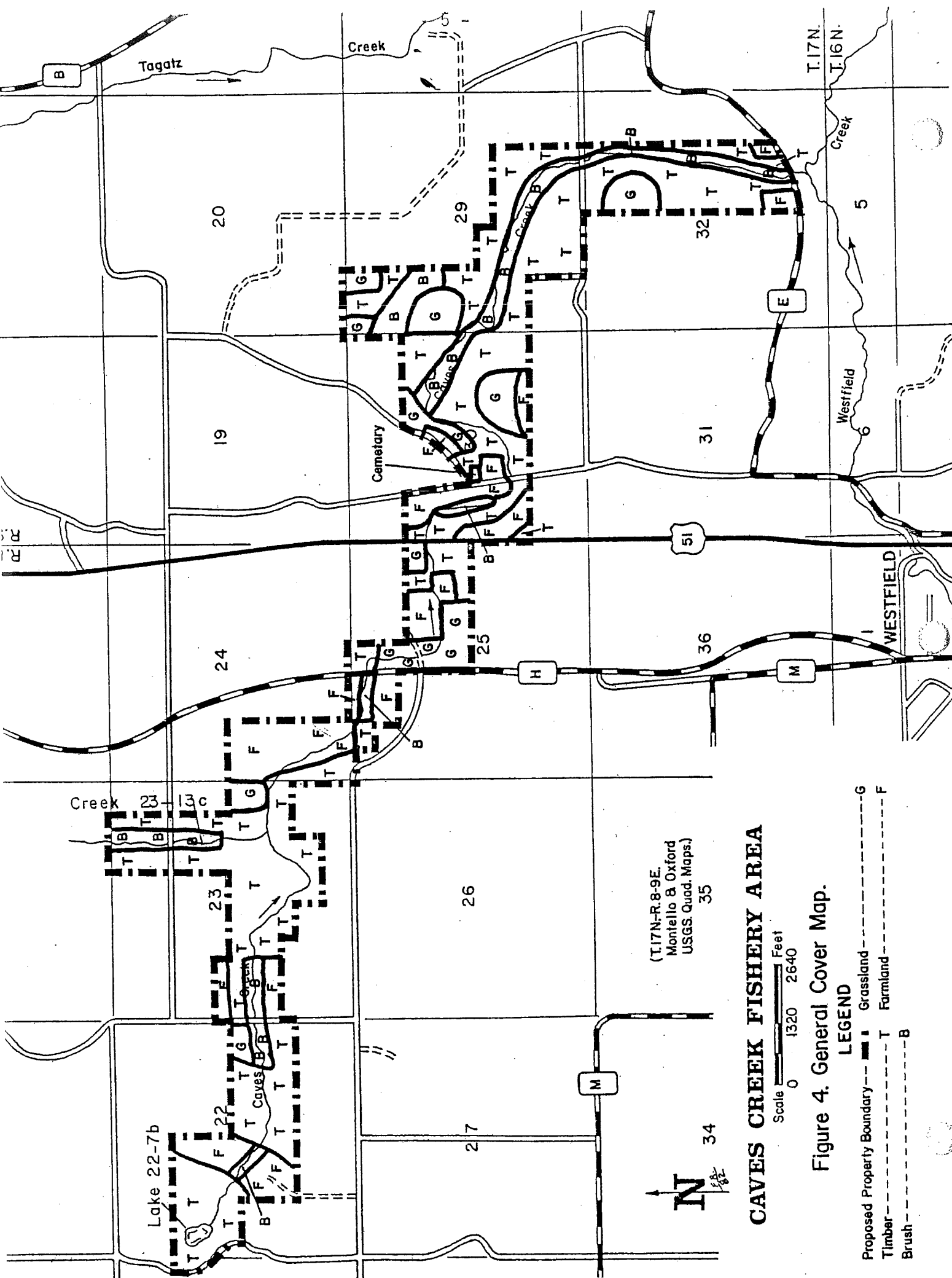
1. Creation of the Caves Creek Fishery Area, Marquette County with the boundary shown in Figures 2, 3, and 4.
2. The transfer of 326.53 acres from the Marquette County Remnant acreage goal to the Caves Creek Fishery Area for properties already acquired.
3. Reduction of the Marquette County Remnant acreage goal by 326.53 acres transferred to the Caves Creek Fishery Area.
4. Approval of an increase of 213.47 acres in the acreage goal.
5. Establishment of the Caves Creek Fishery Area acreage goal at 540.0 acres.

Preferably, all parcels should be purchased in fee title, but acquisition in perpetual easement will be considered. Future land acquisition priority will be given to those parcels which contain significant stream frontage or with a high development potential which, if developed, would seriously detract from the recreational and aesthetic value of the stream environment. Parcels with valuable improvements would have low priority. However, purchase of such buildings and subsequent resale may be necessary to obtain acquisition of desired lands. Parcels with buildings of low value would be purchased and the buildings removed.

All past and future land acquisition has been, and will continue to be, from willing sellers at appraised fair market prices. Acquisition should take place as soon as the present landowners are willing to sell and funds are available. The remaining acreage to complete the goal of 213.47 acres is estimated to cost \$181,450 (\$850/acre - 1986 dollars) and may take 20 years to complete.

Access to the property will be provided by five parking lots of which one is existing and four will be new. Each new parking lot will have room for 5 - 10 cars and cost an estimated \$500. The parking areas will be located on the perimeter of the property just off town roads, which are narrow and require off-road parking.

Trout habitat development conducted on Caves Creek will generally not be intensive. Lack of hiding cover and shallow stream depth are the major factors limiting the trout population. Instream habitat development has been completed on 0.6 mile. Additional development is proposed for another 1.5 miles (Figure 3). This work will include construction of boom covers, wing



CAVES CREEK FISHERY AREA

Scale 0 1320 2640 Feet

Figure 4. General Cover Map.

- LEGEND**
- Proposed Property Boundary ———
 - Timber ———
 - Grassland ———
 - Farmland ———
 - Brush ———

deflectors, bank stabilization, brush bundles, half-logs and brushing. The stream has very good water quality, suitable volume and velocity but lacks spawning bottom materials. Artificial spawning areas may be created by placing mixed-size washed gravel in selected areas to try to enhance natural reproduction of brook trout.

Habitat development on state-owned properties will be conducted as soon as possible. When additional acquisitions are completed, improvements should begin as soon as possible. The cost of habitat development is estimated at \$19,800. This estimate is based on the rate of \$7.50 per foot (1985 dollars) assuming that 1/3 of the lineal footage would be worked on throughout the 1.5 miles of proposed improvement areas.

Maintenance of the fishery area will include rebrushing and treating with an approved herbicide on streambanks as nuisance brush regrows, upkeep of existing habitat structures, posting boundary lines, maintaining parking lots and policing litter. The average annual maintenance cost is estimated at \$2,500.

Wildlife habitat management would be focused primarily on maintenance of existing habitat. Nesting cover for waterfowl, quail and songbird use will be established on 90 acres of grassland at an estimated cost of \$100/acre. Marginal cropland will be reseeded to native grass species using sharecrop agreements when possible. Controlled burns and mowing will be used to control brush invasion. Food plots may be established through sharecrop agreements.

Agricultural lands within the fishery area boundary will be sharecropped to provide food and cover for a variety of animal species and to keep edge and field openings within the forested areas. Wintering wildlife species, particularly songbirds, squirrels, quail and deer, benefit greatly by food plots of corn, oats, alfalfa, brome grass and timothy.

Shrub plantings will provide food and cover for many birds and small mammals. Shrub areas are excellent transition edge areas between woodlands and fields. Thornapple, highbush cranberry, dogwood, wild plum and white cedar are appropriate species to be planted.

Wood ducks depend on trees with cavities for nesting. The woodlands should be managed to provide mature trees near the wetlands areas. Where needed, nesting boxes will be installed to increase available nesting sites.

Forestry practices on the Caves Creek Fishery Area would be limited. Timber is generally in scattered pockets and of low to medium quality; however, forestry practices will be carried out according to management guidelines to produce periodic yet sustained yields while providing wildlife food and cover and watershed protection.

The wild nature of the lands along the river zone will be maintained by management of the bottomland hardwood type, favoring those trees high in scenic value including maple, birch, white pine and tamarack. Shrub species such as willow, tag alder and dogwood will be maintained for height, color and cover diversity as well as nesting and feeding areas for woodcock, grouse and songbirds.

Management of the oak type will consist of periodic cuts of small acreages (2-5 acres) on a rotational basis. This may be accomplished on a timber, pulp, or firewood sale basis and should be of a commercial nature. Reproduction should be present before final cuts are made. Areas lacking sufficient reproduction shall be treated by seed tree or shelterwood methods or planted to establish seedlings before final harvest. Scattered den trees will be left for raccoons, wood ducks, squirrels and cavity nesting birds.

Forestry work of a noncommercial nature, such as pruning and release, will be accomplished with youth camp labor. Firewood permits may be used as a management tool to achieve goals not practical through commercial sales.

Management of the red and white pine type is to follow prescribed management guidelines to the end of a sawtimber rotation. Products resulting from thinning will be pulp, cabin logs, and sawlogs. Natural invasion of brush beneath the pine canopy should provide some food value and escape cover for wildlife.

Upland grass areas should be examined and evaluated on an individual basis. Emphasis should be on maintaining native cover. Those areas that lend themselves to food or shrub plantings should be so managed. Some should be planted to trees, while others should be planted to original prairie species. All areas will be managed to best suit the needs of the wildlife species present.

The Wisconsin Ice Age Trail may be routed through the Caves Creek Fishery Area. This trail and any other public use trails developed on the property, however, must be compatible with the overall intent and purpose of the fishery area.

All areas proposed for development will be examined for the presence of endangered and threatened wild animals and wild plants. If listed species are found, development will be suspended until the District Endangered and Nongame Species Coordinator is consulted, the site evaluated, and appropriate protective measures taken.

A complete biological inventory of the property will be conducted as funds permit. Additional property objectives may be developed following completion of such an inventory.

SECTION II - SUPPORT DATA

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The proposed Caves Creek Fishery Area is located in south-central Wisconsin in northwestern Marquette County. U.S. Highway 51 runs through the center of the property approximately 65 miles north of Madison.

The clear, spring-fed waters of Caves Creek have areas of natural brook trout reproduction throughout its 12.1 miles of stream length. Caves Creek is regarded as one of the better brook trout streams in southern Wisconsin. Fishing pressure is heavy on stream sections accessible to the public.

In 1961, the Wisconsin Conservation Commission approved the Marquette County Fishery Remnant Habitat Program with an acreage goal of 1,179.0 acres. A total of 915.25 acres have been purchased to date under this program. The remaining acreage of 263.75 acres will be assigned to named fishery areas.

Initial land acquisition began on Caves Creek in 1962 when 19.55 acres in easement were purchased under the county remnant program. To date, there have been 301.98 acres in fee title and 24.55 acres in easements purchased along Caves Creek.

Past development activities have included brushing, boundary marking, construction and maintenance of one parking lot, riprapping and building instream cover devices.

RESOURCE CAPABILITIES AND INVENTORY

Soils, Geology, and Hydrology

Area soils are derived primarily from the weathering of glacial drift deposits which are products of glacial action on the underlying Upper Cambrian sandstone. Glacial action also brought material of crystalline rocks from further north so that the sandy soils here are somewhat more productive than the sandy soils found in the unglaciated central sand plains just west of Marquette and Waushara Counties.

Soil types in the Caves Creek area fall into 3 soil associations. The Gotham-Mecan and the Plainfield-Gotham soil associations comprise 75% of the land area. They are regarded as sand to sandy loams that are deep, well-drained, rapidly permeable soils with a sand or loamy-sand subsoil over glacial till and sandy outwash. These sandy soils are generally poor agricultural producers unless heavily irrigated and fertilized since they have low available water capacity and organic matter. Fields must be carefully managed to protect against wind and water erosion. The third soil association, Delton-Briggsville-Mundelein, is described as deep, well-drained to somewhat poorly drained, moderately permeable soils that have a silty clay or silty clay loam subsoil over lake-laid silt, clay, or sand. With proper management, these silty clay-loam soils may produce acceptable crop yields.

The predominant sandy soils allow precipitation and melting snow water to rapidly percolate into the groundwater which provides for an almost continual recharge of the groundwater system. Numerous springs and artesian wells exist and account for stable streamflows within the Caves Creek area. Also, due to rapid infiltration rates, little flooding occurs.

Most of western Marquette County is covered by a thick glacial till referred to as terminal moraine. Caves Creek originates from a 0.75-acre pond that is surrounded by 75-foot high hills in northwestern Marquette County. The upper 2 miles of Caves Creek flow through gently sloping wooded hillsides; the remainder of Caves Creek flows through near-level land areas of agricultural fields, wooded tracts, and marshlands. The creek flows southeasterly until its junction with Westfield Creek. Gradient on the upper one-quarter of the stream falls about 20 feet per mile while on the lower sections it is about 7 feet per mile.

Fish and wildlife

Past stream surveys have shown that brook trout are the most important fish species found in Caves Creek. Although natural reproduction sustains the trout fishery throughout the entire stream length, the major spawning areas are found in the headwater area where spring feeders and instream springs are associated with gravel substrate (Figure 2). Other fish species present and listed in order of abundance include: blacknose dace, white suckers, johnny darters, common shiners, mottled sculpins, creek chubs, mudminnows, brook lampreys, hog suckers, sticklebacks, bluegills, pumpkinseeds and northern pike.

A complete survey of Caves Creek during the summer of 1974, yielded 5,266 brook trout and 12 rainbow trout (436 trout per mile of stream). Because gravel-riffle areas were found adequate to support a natural brook trout fishery, the entire stream length was reclassified as Class I water. Stocking was discontinued in 1975.

A detailed list of wildlife species is not available for Caves Creek. However, a variety of nongame wildlife, typical of the central Wisconsin sand plains, inhabit the proposed fishery area. Sandhill crane and bobwhite quail are present. Wildlife habitat along Caves Creek is highly suited for red and gray squirrels and white-tailed deer. Other game and furbearing species present include ruffed grouse, woodcocks, raccoons, mink, otters, muskrats, red foxes and ducks.

Vegetative Cover

Vegetative cover within the proposed boundary for the Caves Creek Fishery Area consists of lowland brush, timber, grassland and farmland and is shown in Figure 4. The forest reconnaissance study is shown in Table 1 below.

Most of the timber is in small tracts and composed primarily of scrub oak and lowland hardwoods and does not justify a large-scale forestry operation. Management of the wooded areas would be oriented toward streamside protection, natural setting aesthetics, and wildlife production. An adequate number of mature trees to provide mast production and habitat for cavity nesting birds and mammals are important considerations in timber management.

Almost all of the farmland is presently used to grow corn and alfalfa. Lower lands that are slow in draining are often used for pasture.

Farming on some of the lower quality farmland has been abandoned; natural vegetation is growing back on much of this land or it has been planted to pine plantations. These pine tree areas will produce a low volume of good quality timber in the future.

Table 1 - Cover types of fee title lands owned as determined by reconnaissance survey, proposed Caves Creek Fishery Area, Marquette County.

<u>Cover Type</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Oak (5-11")	84.0	27.8
Oak (11-15")	37.0	12.3
Jack Pine (5-9")	9.0	3.0
Red Pine (1-5")	7.0	2.3
Upland Grasses	56.0	18.5
Lowland Brush	56.0	18.5
Fields	53.0	17.6
Totals	302.0	100.0

Endangered and Threatened Species

No endangered or threatened species have been documented on the area. Migratory predatory species, such as bald eagles and red-shouldered hawks, have been sighted over the area, but are not known to nest on the area.

Surface Water Resources

Caves Creek originates from a pond in the terminal moraine in northwest Marquette County. The stream flows southeasterly until it joins with Westfield Creek. Caves Creek drains 11 square miles of watershed and ultimately empties into Lake Michigan via the Fox River. The water of Caves Creek is clear except during periods of high runoff, alkaline (pH of 7.9) and moderately hard (165 ppm Total Alkalinity). It has an average width of 10 feet, a surface area of 13.8 acres, a normal flow of 8 cfs, and a gradient of 9.3 feet/mile. Due to the warming effect of the natural headwaters pond, the upper 0.7 mile of Caves Creek are non-trout waters. Numerous springs and seepage areas beginning in the center of Section 22 of Springfield Township maintain adequate water flow and temperature for 12.1 miles of trout stream waters.

The stream has 3 main areas with gravel substrate suitable for successful brook trout reproduction (see Figure 2). Generally, however, the lower one-third of the stream has more sand and silt and a higher pool to riffle ratio. Undercut banks, pool depth and other trout cover are absent in many areas of the stream. Instream vegetation is sparse. Overhanging alder is often dense along the streambanks.

The 0.75-acre pond at the headwaters of Caves Creek has a sand to sandy muck bottom with a maximum depth of 1.5 feet. Aquatic vegetation is abundant. This pond is classified as a wilderness lake with a high value for wood ducks.

An unnamed tributary, 1.2 miles long, enters Caves Creek at Section 23 in Springfield Township. Spawning brook trout and fingerlings have been found in this spring-fed tributary.

Table 2a - Classification of Streams in the Proposed Caves Creek Fishery Area, Marquette County.

<u>Stream Name</u>	<u>Length in Miles</u>		<u>Surface Acres</u>
	<u>Class I</u>	<u>Warm Water</u>	
Caves Creek		0.7	0.6
Caves Creek	12.1		15.2
Creek 23-13c	1.2		0.9
Totals	13.3	0.7	16.7

Table 2b-Pond Within the Proposed Caves Creek Fishery Area, Marquette County.

<u>Pond Name</u>	<u>Surface Acres</u>	<u>Maximum Depth(ft.)</u>	<u>MPA (ppm)</u>	<u>pH</u>
Pond 22-7b	0.75	1.5	166.0	6.7

Historical and Archaeological Features

No architectural, archaeological, or historical surveys have been made of the area. Thus, prior to any movement of soils or structures to accomplish proposed objectives, the State Historical Society will be contacted for advice.

Ownership

Currently, 301.98 remnant acres are owned in fee title and 24.55 in perpetual easement on the proposed fishery area which does not have an approved boundary or acreage goal. The cost of land purchases to date totals \$116,638 with fee title lands costing \$111,578 and perpetual easements, \$5,060.

Current Use

Fishing - Caves Creek receives moderate fishing pressure through most of the fishing season although the first 2 days of trout season are usually the busiest. The number of anglers seen using the stream declines in the last month of the season (September).

Hunting and trapping - Public lands along Caves Creek receive heavy hunting pressure during the entire gun-deer season and moderately heavy pressure on weekends during the archery season. Hunting for ruffed grouse, squirrels and woodcocks is common. Trapping for raccoons, foxes and muskrats is also common. Other recreational uses of the area include hiking, sight-seeing, mushroom and berry picking, and cross-country skiing.

The number of participant days of use is estimated at 1,000 for fishing, 1,000 for hunting, and 425 for other uses.

Land Use Classification

The land within the proposed area for the Caves Creek Fishery Area is grouped into 2 main categories, Resource Protection and Resource Development, as shown in the Land Use Classification Map (Figure 3).

1. Resource Protection - The Natural Areas Preservation Council of the DNR recognizes a 20-acre spring and fen Public Use Natural Area (N) located in T17N, R8E, S22, SW1/4, NW1/4. This site and any additional sites will be managed and/or developed only after consultation with the Preservation Council.
2. Resource Development - The remainder of the land within the Caves Creek Fishery Area has been classified under this category as a Fish and Wildlife Management Area (RD₂). The intent of this classification is to perpetuate and/or develop wildlife and fisheries habitat as well as to provide habitat protection for any threatened or endangered plants or animals.

MANAGEMENT PROBLEMS

Fisheries Habitat

The amount of suitable habitat presently limits the trout fishery. Natural reproduction in the lower one-third of the stream is reduced due to a lack of spawning gravel substrate. A lack of instream cover and bank cover reduces the trout carrying capacity, especially for larger fish. Excessive brush growth in some stream sections makes fishing difficult, while dead or dying alders falling into the stream have caused portions to be wide and shallow. Cattle grazing on the streambanks is also a source of siltation and excessive nutrients, and reduces the carrying capacity.

Public Overuse

Since the proposed Caves Creek Fishery Area is within an easy half-day drive of large population centers, the potential for high public use exists. Overuse of the area could significantly affect fish and wildlife populations as well as detract from the aesthetic quality of the outdoor resource. Trespassing onto neighboring private lands can be a problem when signs delineating property boundaries are vandalized or not heeded. Some hunters also mistakenly think that fishing easement areas are also open for public hunting.

Private Development and Inholdings

Private inholdings within the property boundaries will limit management, habitat development, and public use until land acquisition is completed. Subdivisions for seasonal and permanent residences within property boundaries reduce aesthetic quality. Many of these land parcels may not be available for purchase for a number of years.

RECREATION NEEDS AND JUSTIFICATIONS

Trout streams are a relatively scarce resource in southern Wisconsin. The protection, preservation, and public access to these streams is of high priority. Outdoor recreation in a natural environment close to large population centers is generally limited. As gasoline and transportation costs increase, it is expected that people will not travel extreme distances to pursue their outdoor recreation. This would undoubtedly increase the pressure on public lands in southern Wisconsin. Recreational demand has risen dramatically over the last decade and is expected to further increase. Private lands will continually be less available to the general public. With proper planning and management, the Caves Creek Fishery Area will provide quality recreational opportunities.

The 1983-84 Wisconsin Blue Book lists the population of Marquette County at 11,672 people. The total population for Marquette, and the 4 immediately adjoining counties, is given at 105,247. Stevens Point, Oshkosh, Portage, Wisconsin Rapids and Madison are nearby population centers. In addition, the smaller towns or villages of Coloma, Harrisville, Montello, Neshkoro, Wautoma and Westfield are all located within 20 miles of the area. The Caves Creek Fishery Area is within 3 hours driving time of Madison, Milwaukee and the Fox River Valley areas.

Caves Creek and Marquette County are part of Planning Region 6 which also includes Waupaca, Waushara and Green Lake Counties. Large numbers of visitors use the region for recreation, because there are good numbers of surface waters and they are well distributed. However, the numbers of visitors tax the resource base, including the surface waters.

The Wisconsin Outdoor Recreation Plan of 1977 and the State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan of 1981 recognize a need for increased fishing participation in the region, and indicate that need can be accommodated by improving and increasing public access. Acquisitions on the Tagatz Creek Fishery Area will provide additional access.

The value of many fishery areas for hunting and other recreational activities often is equal to the fishery values. Caves Creek provides excellent habitat for white-tailed deer and squirrels. The diversity of land cover types creates a high potential for nature study, hiking, cross-country skiing, and berry picking.

ANALYSIS OF ALTERNATIVES

The Department considered 3 alternatives from which the proposed management plan was selected. The analysis of alternatives is as follows:

Do Nothing

Under this alternative, the existing public acreage would remain; however, a policy of not acquiring additional public lands along Caves Creek would provide for no additional public access along the stream. Subdivisions or other development might occur along the stream corridor and have a negative impact on the water quality and natural aesthetics. This alternative would not accommodate increasing recreational demand.

If all fish management practices were halted, fish habitat would deteriorate in future years. Existing stream improvement structures would gradually fail. Tag alder would enroach and cause a wider and shallower stream channel. Bank erosion problems would go uncorrected and silt would cover spawning beds.

The wildlife habitat under this policy would remain relatively stable over a period of time before undergoing a gradual decline in quality and carrying capacity.

Reduce the Fishery Area

The Department has the responsibility to provide recreational lands and to protect and enhance the State's outdoor resources. Caves Creek is considered too valuable a trout fishery resource in southern Wisconsin to divest of the present state-owned property. Under a reduction program, lands currently open to public hunting, fishing, and other outdoor recreation would be lost at a time when the demand for public lands is increasing. Policy of the Natural Resources Board discourages disposing of existing State properties with such fine aesthetic values as Caves Creek.

Enlargement of the Proposed Fishery Area (Recommended Alternative)

It is desirable and recommended to create the Caves Creek Fishery Area with an acreage goal of 540.0 acres. This alternative provides for habitat management necessary to improve the existing resources. Under this policy, the present carrying capacity of fish and wildlife on public lands would increase, and will help prevent decline of the present resources. Completion of the proposed acquisition would create a better defined property boundary to reduce trespass onto neighboring private lands. Construction of parking areas will reduce congestion problems on town roads and allow more efficient policing of litter.

APPENDIX - Comments by outside reviewing agencies to the Caves Creek
Fishery Area Master Plan

During the period of 45-day review, a number of comments were received from outside reviewing agencies or persons. Their reviews, and DNR Task Force responses where necessary, follow:

Michael Stapleton, Zoning Administrator, Marquette County, Montello, WI

I have reviewed the proposed Master Plan for Caves Creek, and am in general agreement with its content and goals.

I would suggest, however, that one additional item receive mention on page 12, concerning management problems with fisheries habitat. I travel the area frequently, and have observed that Caves Creek is subject to frequent flooding following heavy rains. This is easily observed from County Trunk Highway H, where the creek can often be seen out of its banks following rains of only an inch or so, while other area streams in their headwater areas show much more stable flows, and are less affected by summer storms.

Cattle grazing is mentioned as a source of siltation and nutrient loading. The flooding I refer to must come from a much wider area than just the streamside pastures referred to, and would also be a major source of silt and nutrients, perhaps even more so.

The impact of a heavy rain on this headwater area during the winter period when brook trout eggs incubate and hatch could be devastating. The solutions to runoff problems may lie beyond the department's jurisdiction and beyond the fishery area boundaries, but the plan should acknowledge that the problem exists.

Thank you for considering these comments.

DNR RESPONSE: Heavy rains do occasionally cause flooding in the area between County Trunk Highway H and the confluence with Creek 23-13c; the stream may overflow its bank for a short time period. However, the major spawning areas are either upstream or downstream far enough that siltation problems for juvenile trout may not be as severe as one might initially suspect.

Daryl G. Christensen, Angling Unlimited, Montello, WI

Overall view of Master Plan: Excellent.

It is obvious that studies of the Caves Creek Fishery Area are accurate and complete. To do nothing with the Caves Creek Fishery Area would be a tragic mistake. (P 14) Human development potential is too great a risk at this time and would certainly destroy the goals of this Master Plan. While limited enlargement is desirable (P 14) Intensive Management (P 15) would be preferred.

DNR RESPONSE: The task force agrees with you and thanks you for your comments.

Daryl Christensen (continued)

With new Wallop/Breaux funds available, is intensive management a possibility? If not, I would support the limited enlargement plan at this time, until such time more funding is available for more intensive management.

DNR RESPONSE: Acquisition of all the land within the proposed boundary would allow for more intensive management; however, present limitations on manpower, funding, and acreage goals necessitates a somewhat limited enlargement plan.

Acquisition of creek 23-13c (page 11) is extremely important for a natural spawning area.

DNR RESPONSE: Acquisition of this tributary is desirable not only as a spawning area but also for the preservation of water quality in the main stream.

Mitchell G. Bent, Chairman, Wisconsin Trout Unlimited, DePere, WI

Overall view of Master Plan: Excellent.

Wisconsin Trout Unlimited does hereby submit comments on the Master Plan Review for the Caves Creek Fishery Area in Marquette County, Wisconsin.

Wisconsin Trout Unlimited finds the Master Plan Review to be acceptable. We are pleased that the Department is pursuing this plan, as Caves Creek is one of a number of small yet important coldwater streams in south-central Wisconsin that deserve attention regarding protection of its ecosystem.

One area of concern that I have heard from some members of our organization is the Department's predilection sometimes to pursue forestry practices on such fishery areas that lean heavily on pine production, specifically red pine (Pinus resinosa). While I cannot find anything that specifically states how much acreage is to be managed for pine production, it is the view of Trout Unlimited that such acreages, especially within watersheds of delicate streams like Caves Creek, be kept minimal. Pine plantings are not known for high wildlife benefits, and the high evapotranspiration rates of pines can result in a lot of groundwater being pulled from the soil due to the trees biochemical processes. This can have deleterious effects on instream flow.

DNR RESPONSE: Forestry practices on the Caves Creek Fishery Area would be limited. The overall goals and objectives of the master plan call for management of the area for fisheries and wildlife resources and other compatible recreational activities. Management of red pine will be generally limited to those plantations already in existence. The master plan does recognize that oak trees, shrubs, nesting cover, and food plots are of a higher benefit to wildlife.

Mitchell Bent (continued)

Again, Wisconsin Trout Unlimited approves of the Master Plan Review for Caves Creek Fishery Area, and we concur with the Department's recommended alternative of Limited Enlargement for the project. We hope that the Natural Resources Board will approve of this plan.

DNR RESPONSE: The Department of Natural Resources appreciates the support of Wisconsin Trout Unlimited.

Richard W. Dexter, Chief, Registration and Compliance Section, The State Historical Society, Madison

Thank you for the opportunity to review the Master Plan for the Caves Creek Fishery Area.

Our concerns are adequately addressed on Page 11 of the plan under the heading of "Historical and Archaeological Features." Please do contact us before undertaking any ground disturbing activities or removing any buildings.

If there are any questions concerning this matter, please contact me at (608) 262-2732.

DNR RESPONSE: The Department will contact the State Historical Society whenever necessary.

Dick Lindberg, Liaison, Wild Resources Advisory Council

The Wild Resources Advisory Council recommends Natural Resources Board acceptance of the plan as prepared by the Task Force and submitted to the Council by the Bureau of Fish Management.

DNR RESPONSE: Thank you.

Forest Stearns, Chairman, Natural Areas Preservation Council

We have reviewed the concept master plan for Caves Creek Fishery Area. The goals, objectives and proposed management for this property is compatible with our program interests.

We appreciate recognition of public use natural areas in the plan.

DNR RESPONSE: The Task Force thanks the Natural Areas Preservation Council for its review of the master plan.

Cynthia A. Morehouse, Director, Bureau of Environmental and Data Analysis,
Madison

We have reviewed the Master Plan for the Caves Creek Fishery Area in Marquette County and determined that its Recommended Management and Development Programs would not have significant adverse effects on our transportation facilities. We request, however, that when you propose to acquire interests in lands abutting the right of way of U.S.H. 51 you coordinate with:

D. L. Cronkrite, Director
Transportation District 4
1681 Second Avenue South
Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54494
(715) 421-8300

You should also coordinate with the township or county highway officials whenever you propose to acquire interests in lands abutting the right of way of roads under their jurisdiction.

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on this Master Plan.

DNR RESPONSE: The Department of Natural Resources recognizes the responsibility and interests of highway officials and will consult with them whenever necessary.

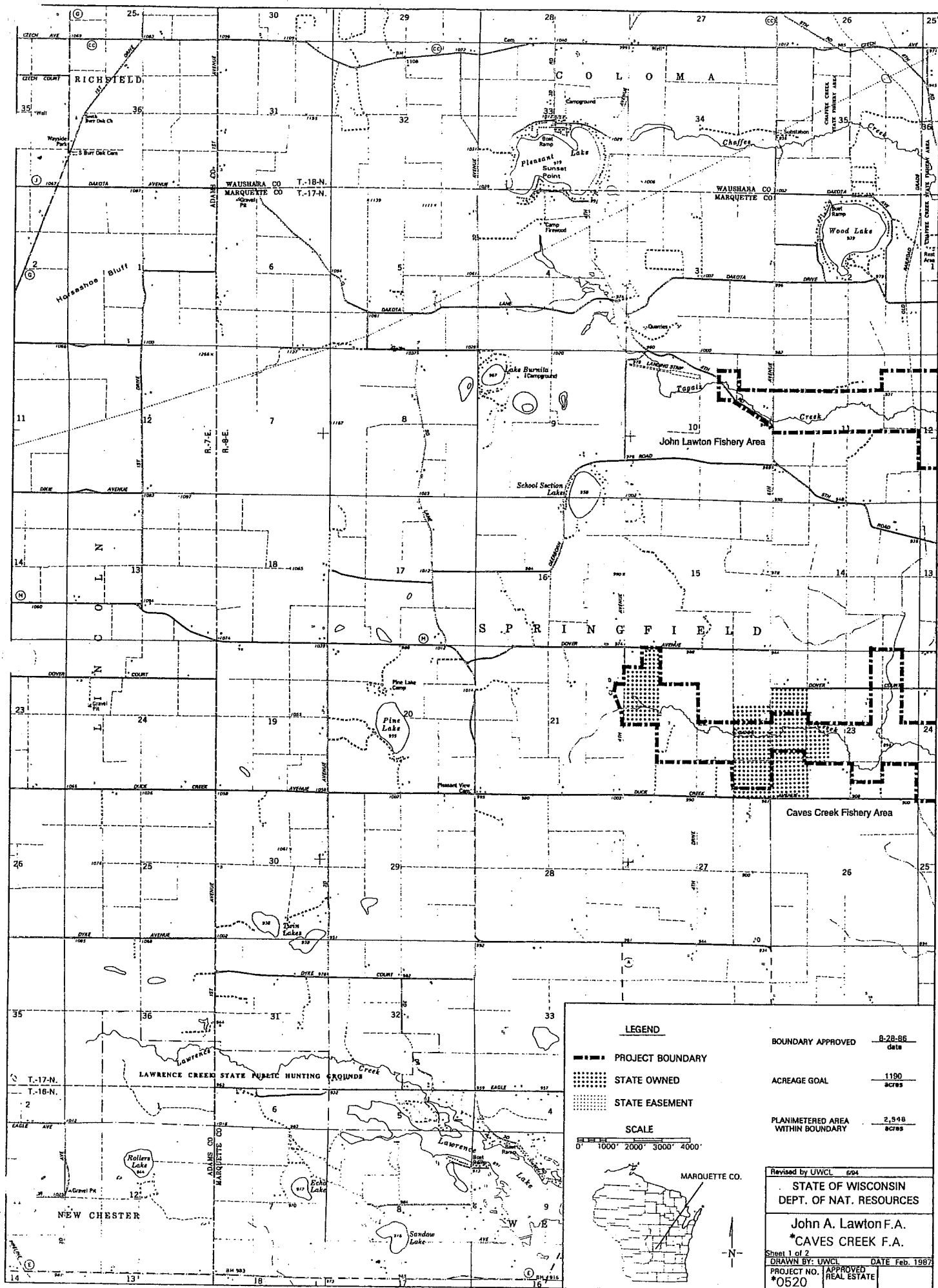
Roy C. Willey, Jr., Executive Director, East Central Wisconsin Regional
Planning Commission, Menasha, WI 54952

The East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, the designated metropolitan clearinghouse for the ten county East Central region, has reviewed the Master Plan for the Caves Creek Fishery Area, Marquette County.

East Central finds the proposal to be consistent with regional plans and programs for Marquette County and supports the plan recommendations. Please attach these comments to the project file. If you have any questions, please contact East Central.

DNR RESPONSE: Thank you for your support of the master plan recommendations.

39570



LEGEND

- PROJECT BOUNDARY
- STATE OWNED
- STATE EASEMENT

SCALE

0 1000' 2000' 3000' 4000'

BOUNDARY APPROVED 8-28-86 date

ACREAGE GOAL 1190 acres

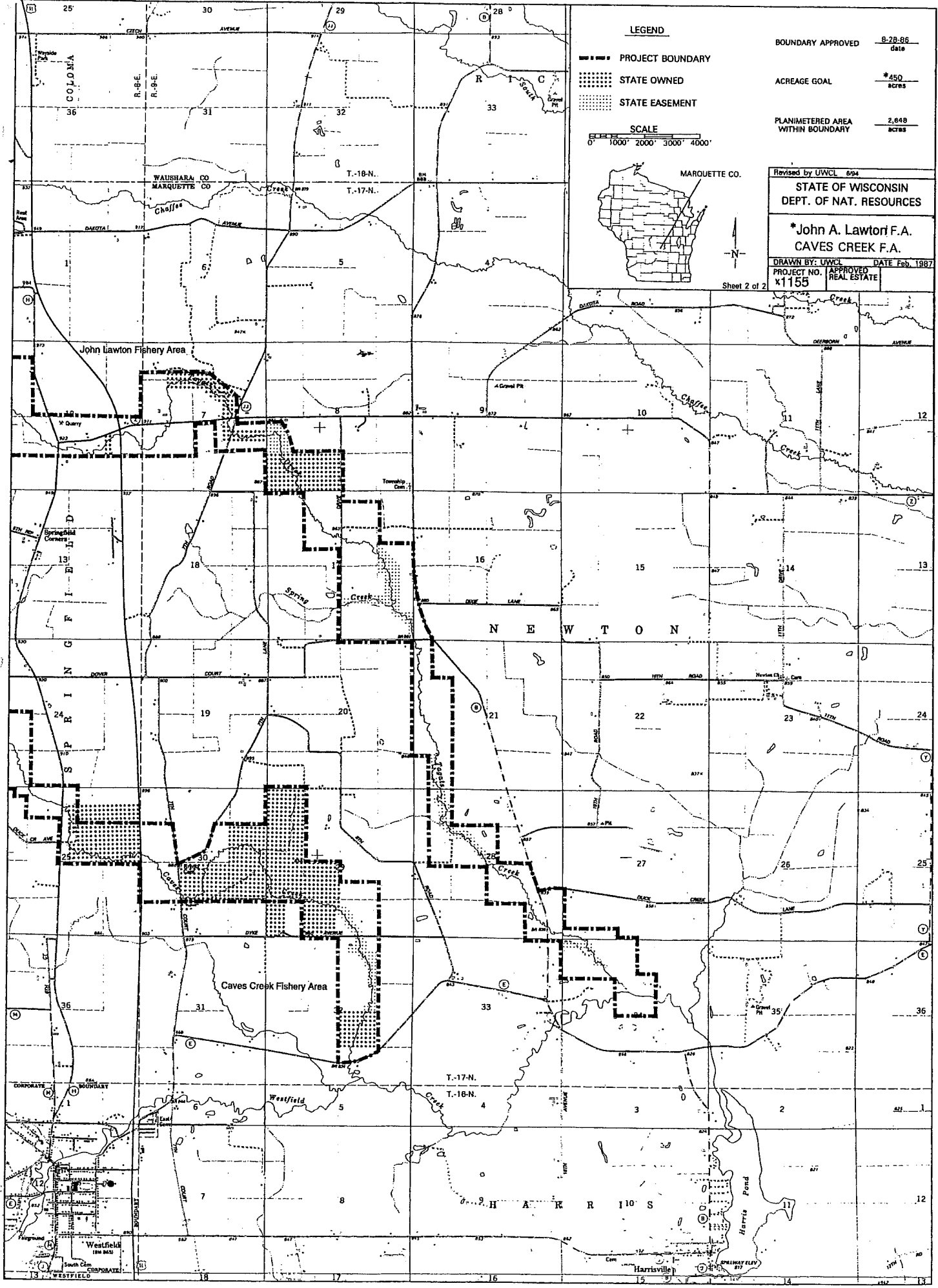
PLANIMETERED AREA WITHIN BOUNDARY 2,948 acres

Revised by UWCL 6/04

STATE OF WISCONSIN
DEPT. OF NAT. RESOURCES

John A. Lawton F.A.
***CAVES CREEK F.A.**

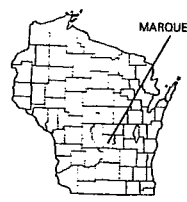
Sheet 1 of 2
DRAWN BY: UWCL DATE Feb. 1987
PROJECT NO. 1 APPROVED REAL ESTATE
*0520



LEGEND

- PROJECT BOUNDARY
- STATE OWNED
- STATE EASEMENT

SCALE
0' 1000' 2000' 3000' 4000'



BOUNDARY APPROVED 8-28-86
Date

ACREAGE GOAL *450
acres

PLANIMETERED AREA
WITHIN BOUNDARY 2,048
acres

Revised by UWCL 8/94

STATE OF WISCONSIN
DEPT. OF NAT. RESOURCES

*John A. Lawton F.A.
CAVES CREEK F.A.

DRAWN BY: UWCL DATE Feb. 1987

PROJECT NO. K1155 APPROVED REAL ESTATE

